

Replace the paragraph that begins on Page 9, line 4 with the following:

A²

Subsequently, as shown in Fig. 7, SiOF film 9 is subjected to an anisotropic etching by reactive ion etching to remove SiOF on the upper surface of the first layer wiring 8. At this time, SiOF film 11 remains having about a half of the thickness of the first layerwiring 8 at the center in the gap portion of the first layer wiring. In this state, fluorine (10) is ion-implanted, for example under the following conditions: an acceleration energy of 10 keV to 100 keV and a dose amount of $5 \times 10^{14} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ to $3 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-2}$. SiOF is removed by the etching also in the gap portion of the first layer wiring 8, and thus the thickness of the SiOF film 11 at the center in the gap portion of the first layer wiring is equal to about a half of the thickness of the first layer wiring 8. In consideration of reduction in wiring capacitance, it is preferable that the thickness of the SiOF film 11 at the center of the wiring gap portion is within the range of 1/3 to 1/1 times of the thickness of the wiring 8, and it is more preferable that the wiring gap portion is filled with thicker SiOF film 11 or perfectly filled SiOF film 11.

Replace the paragraph that begins on Page 10, line 21 with the following:

A

Subsequently, the steps from Fig. 6 to Fig. 9 are repeated once again to form a viahole 18, tungsten plug 19, the third layer wiring 20, and a cover film 21 of SiON or the like is finally formed, thereby completing the final structure shown in Fig. 5.

REMARKS

The Office Action has objected to the drawing, alleging that reference numerals 19 and 10 in Figures 5 and 7, respectively have not been identified. Moreover, the Office Action has objected to the specification. Further, the Office Action has objected to Claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. §1.75, alleging that it is a substantial duplicate of Claim 1. The Office Action has rejected Claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as defining subject matter which is allegedly rendered obvious over Applicants' admitted Prior Art in Figures 1-3 in view of the teachings of U.S. Patent No. 5,893,752 to Koder, et al. ("Koder, et al.").